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ABSTRACT

Chapter 10 of a revised volume on school leadership, this chapter considers the recruitment, evaluation, supervision, dismissal, and professional development of teachers. The chapter also summarizes practical wisdom on these topics and offers suggestions for administrators. Recruiting and selecting teachers may be the most critical tasks faced by school administrators. Because the teacher marketplace is increasingly competitive, aggressive recruiting is needed to obtain the best teachers, including minority candidates. Teacher selection is especially challenging due to teaching function complexity, insufficient attention to hiring, and inadequate selection techniques. To improve this situation, administrators must redesign interviews, beware of attraction to similarities, stress general cognitive ability and academic achievement, and require work sample measures. To help new teachers, induction programs promoting regular interaction among beginning teachers, administrators, and colleagues should be offered. These programs may feature mentor teachers, increased supervision and training, and/or support groups. Similar care must be given to teacher supervision and evaluation, whether summative (focused on authority) or formative (focused on teachers' professional development). Professional development requires a strong supervision component and solid district commitment. Process is as important as product. Schools that offer good working conditions will attract outstanding educators. (MLH)

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Chapter 10

Leading the Instructional Staff

Mary Cihak Jensen

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Chapter 10

Leading the Instructional Staff

Mary Cihak Jensen

It came as little surprise when researchers singled out instructional leadership as a key to determining the effectiveness of a school. The quality of any school, after all, depends more upon the quality of its instruction than upon any other factor. Administrators who dedicate the majority of their time and energy to finding, developing, and working collaboratively with their instructional staffs tend to find themselves one day with effective schools.

This chapter considers the recruitment, selection, induction, evaluation/supervision, dismissal, and professional development of teachers. It summarizes research and practical wisdom on these topics and offers suggestions to administrators who intend to successfully lead their instructional staffs.

Recruiting Teachers

Recruiting and selecting teachers may be the most critical task school administrators face. Each time a teacher is hired, the local school and its district have an opportunity to improve instructional programs. Yet, like many other opportunities, this one is fraught with perils as well as possibilities.

Mistakes made in teacher selection are costly and have long-term effects. Estimating that 5 percent of teachers currently employed in United States public schools could be considered incompetent, Edwin M. Bridges warns that the history of inadequate teachers will repeat itself unless better recruitment and selection procedures are devised. He recommends concentrating district resources on the selection, evaluation, and development of probationary teachers.

Competition in the Marketplace

The teacher marketplace is increasingly competitive. Schools that are able to offer employees higher wages and pleasant working and living conditions may attract a large pool of qualified applicants. Districts that are unable to offer these incentives—especially those in urban and isolated rural areas—may find it difficult to attract competent teachers. In most regions of the country, filling vacancies in math, science, foreign language, and special education can be particularly difficult.

Competition among districts in the teacher marketplace has qualitative as well as quantitative dimensions. Schools that seek qualified personnel are hampered in their search by national problems of inadequate academic standards and teacher preparation. Historically, college students who major in education have been, as a group, less academically able than most other college students. Even though there is some evidence that the trend may be reversing, there are still many academically unqualified individuals in the national pool of applicants. Therefore, administrators need strategies that will increase their chances of finding the most qualified candidates.

Aggressive Recruiting

Districts intent on hiring the best teachers develop policies as well as budgets to express their commitment. Abandoning any traditional recruiting season, they instead develop applicant pools year-round, monitoring their candidates with efficient computer systems.

Having a large pool of applicants to select from increases a school's chances of finding a teacher who is well qualified both academically and personally. To attract a large number of applicants, school leaders need to "get there first." Successful recruiters are ready to "sell" their schools: they advertise widely and seek candidates on college campuses or at regional recruitment conventions. In some states, both innercity and rural districts attract applicants by promising benefits ranging from bonuses to relocation services to reductions in rent. These incentives, usually offered in cooperation with the local business community, demonstrate respect and support for the accomplished professional. These indications of support are likely to be as important as the material incentives themselves.

One superintendent-principal of a rural school sees recruitment as a combination of search, salesmanship, and followup. Her search is enhanced by the relationships she maintains with university placement officers and with student teacher supervisors. "They know me and they know my school," she says. They also know by now that she wants and gets top candidates. Seven years ago, she had six applicants for a teaching position; after energetic recruitment at the universities she now considers up to sixty applicants for each position.

Her efforts don't stop there: she considers the interview an opportunity to sell her school to valued contenders. She thanks them for their time, offers a tour of the school, coffee or tea, and her finest salesmanship. Many exceptional teachers recruited through this process say her school was the only one that revealed so much about its programs during the interview, the only one that made a concerted effort to learn of applicants' interests and needs.

When this carefully designed process is used, more than one candidate typically emerges as exceptional. To demonstrate her interest in top candidates, this school leader includes followup in the process:

> Sometimes the top three candidates are so close it's nearly a flip of the coin. I don't want to lose the other two. I follow them for some

time, sending Christmas cards, for instance, letting them know we are still interested in them. If a single element in their background discouraged me about them, I tell them. If they have a weak preparation in mathematics, for example, I recommend additional courses.

Energy and candor have brought a constant stream of candidates to this rural school. In this, as in other successful recruitment campaigns, teachers are attracted to the personality of both the recruiter and the school.

Recruitment is tightly linked to other factors of educational leadership. Schools that offer a professional environment—manageable class size, supportive inservice, staff collegiality and cohesion—attract and keep qualified teachers. Districts that provide supportive yet stimulating work environments and communities that welcome the educator will find teachers when others will not.

Recruiting Minority Teachers

Finding minorities to fill teaching positions presents an even greater challenge. Obtaining credentialed minority teachers has become more difficult just as the percentage of minority students in public schools has increased.

With decreased numbers of minorities entering higher education and obtaining master's degrees or teaching credentials, it is likely that large numbers of the nation's students will, throughout their schooling, have no contact with minority educators. Bernard Gifford considers the trend an ominous one: it could result in tension between minority communities and nonminority teaching staffs. The issue is significant not just in this generation of teachers: minority students may lack the role models that would guide their own choice of careers in education and the cycle may well continue.

Commentators such as Michael B. Webb point to at least three causes for decreasing numbers of minority teachers:

1. Like women, minorities enjoy expanded career possibilities; they can pursue professions more lucrative and prestigious than teaching.
2. Minority enrollment in higher education has lowered, presumably because of higher tuition costs and reductions in financial aid.
3. Minorities have a higher failure rate in teacher competency testing despite the fact that the performance of minority students on tests such as the SAT has been improving.

According to Peter A. Garcia, test bias in teacher competency tests may account for much of the problem. Most minority candidates grow up in environments substantially different in language and cultural patterns from those of the dominant society. Given the increase in minorities' SAT scores, it may also be that the more academically capable minority students are seeking careers other than teaching. Regardless, districts that evaluate teacher candidates by multiple criteria rather than by a single test score allow minority

teacher candidates to demonstrate their unique contribution to education.

If the cycle is to be broken, with more capable minorities entering teaching and providing professional role models, recruitment must begin very early. Gifford suggests the recruitment of minority high school students who express an interest in teaching as a career. Providing them with highly qualified teachers and counselors in an intensive academic program can begin to alter the trend. Districts can work within their own schools, encouraging academically talented minority students toward educational careers, enrolling them in specialized pretraining academic programs, teaching test-taking skills, and developing scholarship funds for their education as teachers.

Once a district spots a trend of fewer minority teacher applicants, it can address this from a short- and a long-term perspective: first, expand recruitment beyond its geographical area to attempt to meet immediate needs, and second, extend recruitment down into its own secondary schools to meet needs of the future.

Selecting Teachers

Recruitment is only a first step toward the hiring of capable teachers. From among the applicants, schools must choose the best person to fill the vacancy. Making that choice is not easy: administrators tell of tedious decision-making and, worse, of serious consequences of mistakes.

With the amount of public attention drawn to the quality of teacher training institutions, one would think that teacher education graduates who have the "best" academic qualifications would have a distinct advantage in securing a teaching position. But could it be that, despite the concern about the qualifications of student teachers and the performance of training institutions, school districts themselves do not seek the most academically talented graduates? Could school districts be contributing to the problems of teachers' competency by not preferring the most promising candidates?

Recent studies support a hypothesis proposed by W. Timothy Weaver: methods used to select and place teachers do not result in more academically competent teachers being hired. In Weaver's study, subjects who had lower test scores on four out of five measures of academic competence in mathematics, reading, and vocabulary were more likely to be teaching than those who had higher test scores. Granted, the design of his study did not allow him to distinguish between those who did and those who did not actively seek teaching positions. In research designed to allow that discrimination, Nancy Perry found that the "best" candidates as measured by their grade point average (GPA), evaluation of their student teaching, and professional recommendations were not favored in hiring. Neither were the "worst" favored. Therefore, Perry concluded that academic criteria apparently do not significantly affect the job-hunting experience of graduates.

In a study by Beverly Browne and Richard Rankin, superior cognitive

skills did not predict employment as a teacher. In fact, being rated as "bright" by a college supervising teacher was negatively related to finding a job. Calling for further research into hiring processes, Browne and Rankin concluded that personality factors may be more important than knowledge in determining whether or not an applicant is selected.

My own research has shown no significant relation between measures of candidates' ability and offers of employment. Neither has it shown any significant relation between measures of achievement within teacher education and subsequent employment, though in the same study the only significant predictor of success as a teacher was performance in student teaching. One possible explanation for these findings is that employers in school districts simply have not considered measures of the cognitive characteristics and academic achievement of potential teachers.

Why Is Selection Difficult?

Three conditions make the hiring of qualified teachers a challenge: complexity of the teaching function, insufficient attention to hiring, and inadequate selection techniques.

Teaching is a complex task. Teachers judge and organize curriculum, orchestrate simultaneous learning activities, diagnose group and individual needs, participate in school decision-making, advise parents, represent the school in the local community, and enhance students' academic and emotional health. Each individual teaching position in turn demands specific skills requiring a blend of specialization and generalization, independence and cooperation.

When teachers are expected to perform such a wide variety of functions, how does a school administrator assess so many abilities? Cognitive skills alone do not make a teacher. As Jean C. Sisk says, it is personal and social characteristics that make a teacher out of a scholar. Since the turn of the century, researchers have confirmed what personnel directors sense: no one measure or test can assess a candidate's potential as a teacher.

The situation facing small schools is particularly problematic. In small schools teachers often need to possess a wide range of abilities and certification in more than one area or level. In addition, there may be more pressure exerted on them to adjust to the community—to its expectations, its lifestyle, and its support systems. Since supervision may be remote, often teachers in rural schools must be capable of a high degree of autonomy.

A second factor that makes selection of qualified teachers difficult is that often little time, money, or attention is devoted to hiring. Most of the nation's school districts do not have policies for the selection of employees, and most administrators lack training in systems that would increase their chances of choosing the best candidate.

In addition, the selection of teachers has received relatively little attention from researchers. Compared with other areas of educational research, studies of hiring practices are few, validation of procedures is minimal, advice

to well-intentioned personnel directors is scarce.

Third, the process by which teachers nationwide are commonly selected may explain in part why the "best" in terms of academic and performance ratings are not necessarily the first to be hired. The consensus of research findings is that in American schools administrators often fail to gather enough information about candidates. Decisions to hire teachers may be based on inadequate selection procedures.

General Selection Procedures

Typically, moderate- or large-sized districts follow one of two general procedures for selecting teachers:

1. *School building administrators, often with members of their staff, screen applicants.* After reviewing information about the applicants and interviewing them, the school recommends final candidates to the district office staff for approval. The district office staff member responsible for personnel reviews the applicants' files, verifies references, and approves or disapproves of the school's choice.

2. *District personnel officers or teams screen applicants.* After examining all information available about the candidates and perhaps conducting interviews, the personnel officer or selection team recommends five or six candidates to the local school. These candidates are considered to be the most qualified for the position. The local school administrator, often with members of the school staff, names the preferred candidate.

Each procedural option has its supporters. Administrators who favor the second procedure contend that it gives more assurance that the district is complying with equal opportunity regulations in employee selection. Those who argue for the first option believe that local administrators are in a better position to know the qualifications a particular job requires. Districts increasingly report the addition of layers to the selection process: such layers are seen as an insurance policy, a protection of the district's interest in teacher selection.

In one moderately sized district, the school principal and his or her selection team review applications on file at the district office, conduct preliminary phone checks of references, interview promising applicants, and refer two or three top candidates to the director of elementary or secondary education. Applicants surviving that level of review are sent to the director of personnel for a third interview. At each level of screening, interviewers use formal rating sheets and rank-order the applicants they see. To avoid biasing the next interviewer, candidates are sent to the next level unranked. At the end of the process, the director of personnel calls the school administrator to compare the district's ranking with the local school's choice. Consensus is valued but veto power is mutual. The procedure takes time, but the district's administrators believe the importance of selection decisions justifies the time allocated to the selection process.

Wherever the selection process begins, training of all those who will

participate in selection is essential. Many districts use group training sessions for their administrators, leading them to consensus about the characteristics of good teachers and teaching them strategies that will identify those teachers.

One form of training occurs when districts validate their employment processes by studying how candidates selected in previous years actually performed in classrooms. If a teacher fails to perform according to the expectations of the district, capable personnel managers review the hiring of that candidate, seeking clues to what went wrong so that improvements can be made.

The Interview

The interview is the most common and influential selection technique used in the hiring process. Yet the interview, if used incorrectly, is neither valid nor reliable. The average interview may stand little chance of being a representative "slice" of an applicant's life, an accurate measure of a teacher's competence. Typically the interview is unstructured, lasts less than one hour, and is highly influenced by first impressions, appearance, nonverbal behavior, and conversational skills. Untrained interviewers tend to ask unchallenging questions and to use the interview as an opportunity to talk about their own philosophy.

Some studies suggest that many interviewers may arrive at their decision to hire or reject an applicant within the first five minutes of the interview. The remainder of the interview is used to find evidence to support their initial choice.

Although often maligned, the interview is not without promise. An interview helps employers evaluate a candidate's social and personal characteristics. It taps several areas of social competence that are associated with successful teaching—capacity for leadership, interpersonal skills, commitment, sensitivity, verbal expressiveness. The reliability of the interview process increases when interviews are structured: when candidates are asked the same questions, they in effect "run the same course." Despite the claims of their publishers, no commercially packaged, structured interview formats have been judged as valid in refereed professional journals. Conducting a thorough job analysis prior to the interview and using a selection team rather than an individual interviewer improves interviews.

William Goldstein offers a format and samples of questions designed to draw explicit answers from candidates. Good interviewing, he says, is like good teaching: it moves from the known to the unknown, from the simple to the complex.

> Interviews should allow the candidate opening familiarity—easy responses, perhaps about themselves—and move quickly to more rugged terrain. Regrettably, many interviews never leave easily traversed meadows for the more challenging mountains of intellectual questioning that stretch the candidate. Opening questions at interviews tend to deal with biographical information and the

> candidate's aspirations. Such questions have lubrication value; they ease strangers into familiarity. But once a firm footing is in place, such questions should be abandoned quickly.

Goldstein offers examples of questions from that more rugged terrain:

> A third-grade student chronically fails to do assignments in the prescribed manner. Conferences with parents have failed to alter the situation. The principal urges you to "keep trying." Your move.
>
> You give a pretest that shows you that map-reading skills of your fourth-graders are appalling. Describe your course of action in detail.
>
> How would you explain the concepts of inflation, interest rates and national debt to sixth-grade students at a level that they understand?

A mixture of questions that demand problem-solving and queries that tap subject-matter knowledge allows the candidate to demonstrate his or her thought processes as well as educational background. Despite the rigor of his format, Goldstein reminds interviewers to think like candidates, anticipating their emotions and tensions. Top candidates, he argues, will receive multiple offers: their choice may be based upon how they were treated in interviews.

Attraction to Similarities

Every district has its selection skeletons, applicants who owe their success as much to their friendship with the assistant superintendent as to their qualifications. Not unlike the industrial workplace, schools are accessible to those with connections, mentors, networks. Choices based primarily on internal connections are often obvious. Choices based on a phenomenon that can be called "matching," however, are more subtle and perhaps more dangerous.

I already noted that interviewers often make the decision to hire or reject the candidate within the first five minutes of the interview. That early decision can be biased by what business calls "the old school tie syndrome," the tendency of interviewers to prefer applicants similar to themselves. Donald L. Merritt, studying 500 principals, found they preferred candidates with attitudes similar to their own. The principals were so attracted to persons of like attitudes that attitude congruence between them and the candidates predicted hiring better than did qualifications for the job. Admittedly, shared values and attitudes may contribute to effective working relationships, but the selectors' decisions about candidates were influenced by the proportion of congruent attitudes, not by the relevance of the attitudes to the vacant position. Merritt concluded that the idiosyncratic attitudes of the reviewer may be the basis for selection or rejection of candidates.

Compatibility of attitudes toward education and the school may produce a homogenous staff, but should compatibility be valued more highly than the applicants' qualifications? To what extent should an effective school

staff seek diversity among its members? Are teacher candidates selected because they in some way match the school's current quality? If so, strong schools become stronger while weak schools would tend to become weaker.

Most selection procedures look good on paper. It is relatively easy for school districts to write policies that proclaim fairness and enthrone excellence. But no matter how good the policies appear on paper, a more basic issue often influences how faithfully the written policy is carried out. Members of selection teams must ask themselves in what way their choices may be influenced by an attraction to applicants who possess attitudes or abilities similar to their own. Those who judge applicants must consciously examine the competencies needed in the vacant position as well as their own attitudes toward education, their school, and prospective staff members. Members of selection teams must identify their faculty's strengths and weaknesses to gain awareness of talents or perspectives that may be absent. Filling those gaps may mean hiring an individual who will challenge existing skills and norms. The critical question in hiring is not "Who will fit in?" but "Who will add to our skills?"

General Cognitive Ability

An increasingly accepted theory in industrial psychology says that employees' general cognitive ability predicts their knowledge of a job and therefore their performance in that job. According to John E. Hunter, the more complex the job, the more the generalization applies: higher ability workers are faster in cognitive operations on the job, better able to prioritize conflicting rules, better able to adapt old procedures to new situations, and better able to adapt to changes in the job.

Teaching clearly demands high cognitive skills. Teachers must be lifelong learners who are able to continually update their base of knowledge, to use new strategies, and to adapt to changing student and community needs. Carl D. Glickman summarizes research that indicates teachers who have the highest levels of conceptual understanding of education are more able to employ a wide range of teaching methods and have more positive relations with peers.

Despite the importance of cognitive ability, school district employers may instead seek teachers recommended as enthusiastic, dependable, desirous of working hard, cooperative, and able to benefit from advice, as Robert Mortalani reports. Without denying their importance, one must ask how well those descriptors alone predict an applicant's ability to master the complex tasks of teaching—organization of curriculum, diagnosis of group and individual needs, interaction with parents and community. One must also ask how well "able to benefit from advice" describes the teacher who is supposed to be a central participant in the schools' decision-making process and a responsible professional.

Unlike industry, school districts may not be looking for achievers and leaders. Elaine McNally Jarchow reports that when superintendents in one midwestern state responded to this statement, "Candidates with GPAs from 2.5-3.5 are preferred to candidates with GPAs from 3.6-4.0," only 59 percent disagreed.

Let us not overstate the case. After they screen teacher candidates for cognitive ability and achievement, employers must appropriately seek signs of commitment, integrity, empathy, energy, and, yes, magic. Looking for the teacher-scholar means shedding some stereotypes, admitting that the English teacher can enhance a child's linguistic prowess as well as his or her self-concept. Seeking academically qualified educators does not mean teachers will be less compassionate or less dedicated. On the contrary, it probably means teachers will be more self-confident and more capable of contributing to the strength of their school community.

Military recruiters, civil service officials, and employers in industry settings commonly administer tests intended to measure potential employees' cognitive ability. Most school districts instead use what they consider proxy measures of cognitive ability. Such proxies may include challenging interview questions, GPA, and formal tests. Although none of these potential "stand-ins" for more direct measures of cognitive potential can be considered predictive measures of teaching competence, together they can provide clues about an individual's academic preparation, achievement, and judgment skills.

Academic Achievement

A growing number of studies on the prediction of teaching performance are finding a relationship between academic achievement and teaching success. Since the publication of *A Nation at Risk*, districts have increasingly sought transcripts as evidence of an applicant's academic achievement. Even districts that traditionally discounted the importance of grades now publicize their desire for good students whose achievement is reflected in GPA and test scores.

The trend toward testing teachers represents one attempt to improve the competency of educators and to placate the concern of the public. Cut-off scores distinguishing passing from failing are usually determined by the states and may reflect little more than basic literacy. The tests are designed to screen out candidates with failing scores, not to be used as predictive instruments to help districts select candidates with superior skills. Although the tests may assume a minimum level of competency, they function primarily as symbols, and by no means do they serve as comprehensive answers to the teacher competency issue.

More and more frequently, districts are supplementing state-required tests with their own exercises, usually tests of written expression. Potential teachers are asked to write solutions to hypothetical dilemmas or to define elements of their educational philosophy. Personnel officers rate these efforts for logical expression of thought as well as for grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Like other pencil-and-paper tests, district-designed examinations are limited in the scope of talent they are able to measure.

This is not to say that basic skills tests or pedagogical examinations have no value in the screening of potential teachers. They may not be predic-

tors of teaching performance but they may establish a baseline of skill levels essential in any professional role. Like GPA, the tests can be viewed as one more piece in the puzzle of teacher selection.

Work Sample Measures

Even a thick file of scores and references for a candidate may not accurately measure the individual's teaching skills.

Industry commonly uses work sample measures to assess whether a person possesses the exact skills necessary for a specific job. After a thorough job analysis determines which skills are needed in the position, tests are devised to measure them. For example, an individual applying for a position as a typist may take a typing test. It is not common among school districts to use work sample tests, but perhaps it should be. Candidates for teaching positions could be asked for live or videotaped demonstrations of their work as instructors. Alternatively, interviewers could request a written lesson plan designed to teach a specified concept.

Critical-incidents tests are another form of work sample assessment. In this interview technique, candidates are presented with a specific problem situation and asked for solutions. Prior to the interviews, the selection team reviews the questions and formulates a scale of sample responses, rating them as high, medium, or low quality. Each interviewer independently rates the quality of applicants' responses by analogy to the sample responses.

My research suggests that student teaching might also be considered a work sample. The ratings of cooperating or master teachers were found to be the single best predictors of teaching performance three to six years after the completion of teacher education. This research also offers support for the inclusion of masterful teachers on selection teams. Those teachers who are themselves experts can make powerful contributions to the team's assessment of work sample tests.

Broadening somewhat the definition of work sample, leading districts are now considering the probationary years before granting of tenure to be samples of future teaching performance. Candidates in these districts are informed that the selection process is three years in length.

Certainly, selection strategies are becoming at once more thorough and more sophisticated. There is nonetheless no panacea for those who seek to choose the best teacher. Only a carefully considered, thorough selection process ensures that result.

Inducting Teachers

Mounting evidence indicates that the most capable teachers may not remain in the profession. Nearly 35 percent of new teachers nationwide leave teaching after three years. To encourage new teachers and to enhance their

productivity in the classroom, many school districts have developed supportive programs for beginning teachers known as induction programs. The structures of induction programs, whether in educational or corporate settings, vary widely, but all share two common purposes noted by Phillip C. Schlechty:

1. to develop in new members of an occupation those skills, forms of knowledge, attitudes, and values necessary to carry out their occupational roles
2. to create conditions that cause new members to internalize the norms of the occupation to the point that the primary means of social control is self-control

The New Teacher in the School Culture

The new teacher faces many of the same adjustments that any neophyte in any organization is confronted with. Like the newcomer in industry, the new teacher is moving away from familiar places and roles and letting go of former lifestyles and roots.

> Let's face it. The new teacher who opens the classroom on Monday may have graduated last Friday. That teacher may have moved to a new area and lived alone for the first time. All of a sudden, he or she is expected to be an adult and a professional, and an exceptionally competent one at that.

John Mahaffy is director of the Center for Professional Development at the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory in Portland, Oregon. In an interview, he pointed out that many new teachers find their first years traumatic. Structures within schools tend to intensify the new teachers' problems: they often work in isolation, rarely observing each other or getting feedback from their peers. Without established structures of peer communication and support, the new teacher may wonder how to get help without admitting he or she is having trouble. Mahaffy is aware that school administrators may not realize the problems new teachers face:

> Sometimes principals will tell me they wish they had all beginning teachers because they are so competent and energetic. When they say that, I have to wonder how much those beginning teachers are hiding and how hard they are working to seem so competent. Teaching is an incredibly complex job and it takes time to learn it.

Teaching is undeniably "an incredibly complex job," but there is often little time to learn it. In most industrial settings, the orientation of the newcomer includes an apprenticeship period during which the new job may be experienced in a simple-to-complex learning sequence. Dan Lortie contends that this gradual assimilation into the job is not possible for the teacher:

> Fully responsible for the instruction of his students from his first working day, the beginning teacher performs the same tasks as the

twenty-five year veteran. Tasks are not added sequentially to allow for gradual increase in skill and knowledge; the beginner learns while performing the full complement of teaching duties.

In fact, the job first-year teachers face may be more difficult than that experienced staff members encounter. When Elizabeth Clewett summarized research on the beginning teacher, she found that the difficulties of the new teacher tend to be exacerbated by organizational structures. Often new teachers are assigned larger groups of students, more difficult students, and more duties of both an instructional and noninstructional nature. The teaching assignment itself is also frequently unrelated to the new teacher's subject matter expertise and experience in teacher training.

Lack of supervision can contribute to the problems of the beginning teacher as well to the difficulties of his or her district. School principals are frequently reluctant to monitor the performance of new teachers during the first months of the school year, preferring instead to let new teachers "try their wings" without fear of evaluation. While this sentiment may spring from well-intentioned motives, it can have unexpected negative consequences. Unaided, new teachers tend to experience difficulties, particularly in discipline and classroom management, that increase as the school year progresses. Without supervision and feedback, they may repeat costly errors.

In many if not most schools, supervision of new teachers is rare, limited to infrequent and brief observations of classroom performance. Ironically, supervisors tend to rate beginners' competence more highly than do the beginners themselves. Perhaps afraid of discouraging new teachers, administrators may miss opportunities to encourage them.

Typically, new teachers tend to socialize themselves into the profession. They learn both the job of the teacher and the culture of the school by observing staff members rather than by communicating directly with them. A double barrier inhibits open communication: the newcomer is reluctant to disclose a lack of knowledge or competence, and experienced teachers do not wish to be seen as meddlers. Through careful observation newcomers may learn some of the techniques their more experienced colleagues have adopted. Beginning teachers report picking up clues from assignments on experienced teachers' chalkboards, papers left at the copy machine, and comments made in the lunchroom. In schools lacking a structure of peer support, the newcomers may suffer from lack of legitimate access to the expertise of their colleagues.

Clewitt's review of the research shows beginning teachers commonly face similar problems:

- classroom management and discipline
- student motivation
- adjustment to the physical demands of teaching
- managing instructional tasks (organizing work, individualizing assessment and assignments, instruction, locating materials and resources)
- sacrificing leisure time

- managing noninstructional demands of the position (establishing relationships with students, parents, colleagues; managing extracurricular assignments; enlisting assistance of other staff members)

Susan Roper and her colleagues at Southern Oregon State College emphasize the noninstructional challenges beginning teachers face. New teachers, they argue, need to learn to work with other adults, to acquire a more realistic view of the teaching profession, and to be given a more complete theoretical framework from which to work. Too often students enter teacher education believing they will work almost exclusively with children. Typically, teacher education focuses on preparing teacher candidates for instructional tasks and work with children. Rarely does the student teacher learn how to conduct parent conferences, work as a member of a teaching team, seek support in new settings, or deal with the frustration of not reaching every student.

Induction Programs and Teacher Competency

Induction programs vary according to their degree of formal structure and their ability to balance the needs of the beginning teacher and the employing district. One commonality is that they all promote a high level of interaction among the beginning teacher, administrators, and colleagues. Most programs feature one or more of these three structures: use of mentor teachers, increased supervision and training, and support groups for newcomers.

Mentor or Support Teachers

School staffs vary in their acceptance of new members. In the Isaacson study, new teachers had different experiences:

> Oh, they were very supportive, very warm....there were only fifteen faculty members, and it was a really friendly group.

> They aren't very friendly generally, especially because the high school is so big and a lot of them don't really feel comfortable there; I don't feel like that's my home. I just do my own thing, and I don't really feel a part of what is going on.

In a common model, experienced teachers serve as mentors or sponsors, providing the newcomer with friendship and access to a colleague's expertise. From discussing the math curriculum to untangling the social expectations of the staff room, the mentor acts as a soundingboard for the newcomer's questions and concerns. In addition to offering informal support, mentor teachers may provide formal classroom observation in a clinical supervision format.

The selection of mentors is critical. Research and common sense both suggest that a capable teacher who teaches the same subjects at the same grade level using the same instructional style could be very helpful to a new teacher.

Beyond this generalization, however, other qualities should be considered.

The mentor needs more than pedagogical skills: he or she must be able to communicate with the newcomer openly and supportively. Ideally, the mentor should be someone who views the learning process as a mutual one, someone who considers working with a newly trained teacher an opportunity to enhance his or her own skills. In addition to instructional skills, the mentor is likely to influence the values and attitudes of the new teacher. During the transition from student teacher and first-year teacher, newcomers are particularly likely to embrace the philosophy and attitude of mentors. The more uncertain or insecure a new teacher is, the more he or she will cling to the mentor's discipline strategies, worksheets, and beliefs.

Even an exceptionally talented teacher may not communicate effectively with new colleagues. Rather than assume mentors know how to inform, encourage, reinforce, and solve problems with new teachers, administrators should provide training to mentors on effective methods of delivery. If this is not done, the lines between consultation and advice-giving, guidance and judgment may blur.

Supervision and Training

Another model of induction emphasizes increased supervision and coaching by the site administrator or by the district's staff development department. Several states propose to consider the first year of teaching as an internship, one that features intensive feedback from district supervisors. In many schools, administrators offer increased supervision for first-year teachers. At its best, early supervision saves new teachers from making mistakes that could be prevented, reinforces their strengths, focuses their self-evaluation, and initiates them into a district's continuous professional development program.

Balancing the administrator's need to assess competency and the new teachers' need for support is not always a simple feat. In an attempt to achieve that balance, a staff development department in one large suburban district directs the induction program. Regardless of their previous experience, all teachers new to the district will see a member of the staff development team within the first two or three weeks of the school year. Teachers who have had teaching experience but are new to the district are observed and offered individualized staff development plans.

One of the district's staff development specialists assumes responsibility for coaching each beginning teacher. From the start, coaches attempt to be as supportive and nonthreatening as possible. Before school opens, they visit with the first-year teachers, focusing on the teachers as well as their performance in the classroom; the staff developers want to know what the new teachers are feeling as well as doing.

Coaching takes a variety of forms. In one option, the staff developer makes an appointment with the beginning teacher to observe classroom performance, then, while observing, writes or tapes what the teacher says. Soon after the lesson, the teacher does the first analysis of the script and the coach gives

feedback, pointing out strengths and selecting one area for improvement. Lesson plan strategies from Madeline Hunter's Instructional Theory into Practice (ITIP) program are used as a basis for evaluation.

Coaching may also take the form of demonstration teaching, team teaching, or joint observation of another teacher. The staff developers sometimes literally coach from the sidelines, using preestablished nonverbal cues to guide new teachers through a lesson.

Are the early observations threatening to new teachers? District leaders contend that a newcomer to any organization feels anxiety but that their staff development structure in many ways protects the newcomer from tension by providing predictable support.

In most districts using a staff development coaching format, the routine of classroom observations and conferences is integrated with formal workshops. Topics focus on the typical needs and concerns of first-year teachers:

- providing classroom management and student discipline
- motivating students
- mastering content
- fitting into the school environment
- preparing and organizing work
- locating materials and resources
- establishing relationships with students, parents, colleagues
- adjusting to the physical demands of teaching

Like the mentor programs, those that offer intensive supervision and training deserve some caution. Coaches or supervisors must be able to maintain collegial, problem-solving relationships with new teachers; they must fight the temptation to require beginning teachers to conform to rigid guidelines.

One Northwest school district does not espouse any specific training format. Rather than teach one strategy of instruction, such as ITIP, leaders in this district annually form a training team that conducts a "New Teacher Seminar." The team—composed of district administrators and teachers as well as instructors from outside the district—invites interested, experienced teachers to join the seminar. The course is offered free of charge, and participants receive college credit for completing it successfully. In addition to weekly formal sessions, the training format features individualized classroom observations and followup. The seminar is held during the second quarter of the school year; during the first quarter, new teachers participate in informal support sessions and gather their needs into suggestions for the formal seminar.

Another caution is in order. Training sessions consume time, a valuable commodity for first-year teachers. Administrators need to balance new teachers' need for training with their need for planning and personal time. If training programs are to ease the newcomer's transition into teaching, they must deal with the most pressing needs first, be efficiently managed, and offer compensatory or release time to participants.

Support Groups

Newcomers in schools need to understand that disillusionment, dealing with surprises, and sense-making are normal upon entry into any organization. Districts can facilitate that understanding by forming support groups for new teachers.

Such support groups can accomplish another goal: linking training objectives to the needs of participants. Clewitt found that school personnel report offering more orientation and induction services than beginning teachers report receiving. Why the discrepancy in perceptions? District programs of induction may be largely ceremonial and ritualistic, not addressing the needs newcomers identify as important. More informal district programs are built around those expressed needs.

In one district, during the first nine weeks of each school year teachers new to the district meet once a week with their school's administrators. The weekly meetings acquaint new staff members with district policies, procedures, and values. They also create supportive collegial relationships among the teachers and administrators. Agendas are set by the group: the needs and questions of the new teachers guide the sessions. One teacher describes the mutual support she received from peers:

> Sometimes we'd get together and tell horror stories. Then we'd talk about how we could make our classes better. As a new teacher you say to yourself, "It's just me. Nobody else is having this problem." Then, when everyone else shares what problems they are having, you find out that yours is a common challenge in teaching and that there are ways to solve it.

Over time, perhaps the most significant contribution of induction programs will be the increased interaction they spawn among professionals in schools. Administrators and experienced teachers who unite to meet the needs of the newcomer develop in that process structures of collegiality and collaboration that will serve schools in other ways.

The following sections consider the next vital questions: Once recruited, selected, and inducted, how may capable teachers continue to grow through structures of supervision and professional development?

Supervising and Evaluating Teachers

The retiring superintendent, a forty-year veteran of public schools, summed it up: "What I've liked best about education are those predictable pendulum swings. I figured out that if I stood in one place long enough the pendulum would find me again and I'd be known once more as an innovator."

Of all its swings, the pendulum of educational theory is perhaps nowhere felt more strongly than in the area of teacher evaluation. Is the purpose of evaluation public accountability or teacher growth? Are summative or formative evaluations soundest? Is evaluation best engineered in a bureaucratic

or professional style? Should principals or peers supervise teachers? And, lurking at the heart of the controversy, a question that could not be more basic: Is teaching a science, a craft, an art, or a bit of each? That is, does it require a specific knowledge base, an apprenticed learning, or an instinctive grasp of the learner's context? Is it then best evaluated by checklists, coaching, or intuition?

The Historical Context

In his review of the history of teacher evaluation, James Weber begins at the turn of the century, noting that "inspectors" rated teachers' conformity to district standards in both their professional and personal lives. Soon the emphasis shifted to a model borrowed from industry: observers in the scientific management era rated the apparent efficiency of teachers.

Gradually, administrators sought the cooperation of teachers in their evaluation and in 1973 Morris L. Cogan's *Clinical Supervision* charted the path toward partnership and reciprocity in teacher evaluation. Trends such as teacher-developed evaluation standards, context-driven interpretations, and peer supervision grew out of Cogan's model of trust and cooperation.

In still another pendulum swing, simultaneous to the popularity of the clinical supervision model, public pressure for teacher accountability encouraged attempts to standardize teacher tests and rating forms. Whether such standardization is intended to reward the most effective teachers or to weed out the least effective, these evaluation techniques are often distinct from those that focus on teacher growth. Attempts to find standards against which all teachers can be tested compete with efforts to recognize situation-specific issues in supervision.

The task of finding such standards is complicated by the nature of measurement itself. Valid and reliable measurement requires considerable sophistication: multiple measures, carefully prepared observers, and controls for observers, students, and environmental variables. Many behaviors and functions of teachers are simply not measurable. Measures of student growth are complicated by myriad factors including earlier instruction, home background, transiency, attendance, and emotional health. The school environment similarly contributes a score of variables such as pupil-teacher ratio, availability of materials and supplies, adequacy of support staff, overall school discipline, and management. Measurement experts, a vanishing breed in school districts facing budgetary reductions, may find a new purpose: the evaluation of teacher competency.

In summarizing his historical review, Weber asks pertinent questions: "Can state-mandated evaluation processes ensure that the gains in the humanization of teacher evaluation of the last century will be continued?" "Can teacher development strategies coexist with accountability strategies?" "Can the same people who decide teachers' career placement also oversee their professional development?" Another way of asking the same questions may be

"Will the two trends of evaluation—summative and formative—collide, merge, or exist side by side?"

Summative Evaluation

Accountability advocates prefer to emphasize summative evaluation, a system that usually rates teachers against a fixed scale of standards and then compares their ratings with those of colleagues. Summative evaluation typically focuses on minimum standards, allowing evaluators to distinguish marginal from incompetent teachers. Courts, in judging claims of teacher incompetency, prefer to believe that standardized measures have been taken of a teacher's performance.

Certainly many educational researchers might testify that teaching is too complex a function to be measured by standard rating forms, that such evaluation offers but an illusion of objectivity. Yet in practical terms summative evaluation serves an indisputably essential function in school districts: it is useful in making personnel decisions for promotion as well as dismissal. Used with a ranking system, summative evaluations allow districts to verify the skills of teachers proposed for merit pay and master teacher positions.

After coming to grips with the necessity of some summative evaluation processes, districts that wish to improve educational programs will look carefully at this form of evaluation, its shortcomings as well as its strengths. First, summative evaluations, in their emphasis upon minimum standards, can distract a district from educational excellence. Second, by placing administrators in the roles of "raters" rather than "colleagues" or "partners" in evaluation, summative evaluation can distance teachers from their own growth, making them recipients rather than originators of improvement. Third, summative evaluation falls prey to the problems inherent in any human measurement: evaluators may be untrained or biased, standards may be inconsistent, and single or simplistic measures may be used even though reliability demands multiple or complex measures.

Summative evaluation is improved when administrators are trained in measurement, observations are made over time, and teachers verify the standards and processes that will be used. Yet even when these improvements are in force, districts concerned about the shortcomings of summative evaluation have come to a simple conclusion: it cannot stand alone. Hence the potentially colliding historical streams merge peacefully, as districts combine summative evaluation with formative supervision .

Formative Supervision

Formative supervision focuses on teachers' professional development. Most formative models are feedback models: observers gather data useful to the teacher and, in conference with the teacher, analyze implications of the data. Unlike the standardized forms of summative evaluation, this form of super-

vision is context-specific and individualized. Typically teachers assume a strong professional role in their own self-evaluation, suggesting goals for improvement, strategies for observation, and plans for remediation. Properly orchestrated, formative supervision is linked directly to staff development goals and objectives. The feedback process enables both teacher and supervisor to determine what specific improvement in subject matter expertise or technical skill will promote increased learning in the classroom.

A professional orientation toward evaluation enhances the rights as well as the responsibilities of teachers, providing a framework for teachers and administrators to work together. Allan A. Glatthorn recommends that teachers select which of four types of supervision they want in a given year. Teachers could choose, he says, from clinical supervision, cooperative professional development, self-directed development, or administrative monitoring. While he suggests clinical supervision is most needed by beginning teachers or others experiencing difficulties, he sees cooperative peer development and self-directed development as most useful for experienced teachers. Frequent unannounced visits by an administrator complement the evaluation cycle, according to Glatthorn; such monitoring gives the principal information about the day-to-day functioning of the school.

Clinical Supervision

Cogan's text on clinical supervision has inspired many followers of the professional model, among them Noreen B. Garman. In her discussion of clinical supervision, she outlines four concepts that should guide its practice: (1) collegiality—supervisors are participants in the process of teaching, (2) collaboration—an alliance is formed in the interest of good teaching, (3) skilled service—the supervisor's experience and skills are placed in service of the teacher, and (4) ethical conduct—the supervisor's knowledge will not violate the confidence each holds in the other.

The original clinical supervision model includes a conference prior to classroom observation, data collection, and feedback. In the preconference, the teacher defines the objectives of the lesson and the purposes of the observation, asking, for example, to be observed to improve classroom management or inquiry techniques. Together the supervisor and teacher select a form of data collection, for example, an on-task record or an interaction analysis.

Frequently supporters of the clinical supervision model also embrace Madeline Hunter's seven-step structure for lesson plans, using that format to evaluate teacher performance. Two controversies arise from this intertwining of models. First, Hunter discounts the preconference, claiming it wastes time and biases the observer. Her own critics, such as Barbara N. Pavan, counter that eliminating the preconference reduces collegiality in the supervision model. Second, administrators may tend to limit the clinical supervision theory to Hunter's model of teaching. As Bruce Joyce and Marsha Weil demonstrate, there are currently over twenty defined models of teaching, each appropriate for different purposes. Garman, criticizing the tendency of school ad-

ministrators to simplify evaluation by exalting one model, insists such action stems from an attitude "more like religious certitude than intellectual inquiry."

Artistic Supervision

In contrast to procedures designed to measure teaching competency by following a predetermined plan for observation, evaluators using naturalistic or artistic forms of supervision begin with the desire to understand what is happening in the classroom. Elliot Eisner wants the supervisor to be an "educational connoisseur," one able to detect significant if subtle events and characteristics of the classroom, one able to appreciate what one has encountered. While other systems encourage objectivity, Eisner urges the observer to be intuitive and sensitive, aware of implicit assumptions in the classroom as well as explicit instruction:

> The idea that the skills of teaching can be treated as discrete elements and then aggregated to form a whole reflects a fundamental misconception of what it means to be skilled in teaching. What skilled teaching requires is the ability to grasp their meaning, and the ingenuity to invent ways to respond to them.

Rather than use rating scales, proponents of naturalistic evaluation prefer to use verbatim transcripts, videotapes, anthropological descriptions, and teacher and student interviews. The observer attempts to understand and describe the meaning behind teachers' actions, rather than tallying their frequency or describing their surface appearance. Such depth of knowledge is won only by openness and an investment of time.

Gradually, more attention has been given to the decision-making process that underlies excellent teaching. Evaluation and supervision, if they are to promote growth, must pay attention to the atypical decisions of teachers as well as their typical behavior. David Berliner, commenting on expert teachers (in an interview by Ronald S. Brandt), expresses at once his bewilderment and the complexity of evaluation:

> We know . . . what observable teacher characteristics are related to effective teaching. Now we want to go inside teachers' heads and ask them why they do the things they do.
>
> For example . . . a teacher whose students have more time on task will achieve more. Why then, on a given day, will an expert teacher simply throw the task out the window?

Conclusions in the effective teaching literature are based on correlations between supposedly stable teacher characteristics and student learning. Nonetheless, Berliner finds the behavior of expert teachers varies from day to day and year to year. "Why? These are able, experienced people. There's something they are responding to that makes them change a routine that has worked perfectly for 30 days in a row. They know something we don't."

They know something we don't. Knowing the limits of observation,

knowing when to ask "Why did you do that?," preserves the professionalism of the teacher and the integrity of the teaching act.

Who Should Supervise?

Keith Acheson and Stuart Smith believe that school principals are at a disadvantage when they attempt to do both summative evaluation and formative supervision, regardless of what models they employ. Principals, they contend, lack time, updated training, and recent classroom experience that could make their suggestions practical. Sharing instructional leadership with others may mean more and better supervision of teachers, particularly probationary staff.

It is becoming increasingly common for peer supervisors or coaches to work with teachers in formative evaluation. Their efforts are coordinated with the summative evaluation usually performed by the school principal. Using supervision teams of expert teachers or peer partners addresses common criticisms of summative evaluation: these evaluators offer the benefit of time for multiple observations, credibility gained by recent teaching experience, and presumably increased comfort for the teacher. Carolyn Ruck likens the principal's role in evaluation and supervision to that of a building contractor, "one who is in charge of the total project but who coordinates others' efforts and guides their decisions without controlling them."

The pendulum clearly has not stopped swinging, even though there are many who hope it will steady itself in some middle zone, combining summative and formative purposes, technical and artistic methods, administrative and professional personnel.

The next section considers the dismissal of incompetent teachers. Immediately following that section, this chapter concludes by examining a more pleasant outgrowth of good evaluation—effective staff development programs.

Dismissing the Unsatisfactory Teacher

Although administrators estimate that unsatisfactory teachers comprise only 5 to 15 percent of employed teachers, these individuals take an inordinate toll upon students, colleagues, and the school organization. Ironically, their presence has bolstered many of the school effectiveness reforms discussed earlier in this chapter. Districts honestly facing the long-lasting repercussions of incompetent teaching are more likely to reshape recruitment, hiring, and induction processes. Yet, unhappily, these reforms are not the final answer to the issue of teaching competence. Incompetent teachers may have been tenured before the reforms; probationary teachers may have nearly as many employment rights as tenured instructors; new teachers who successfully complete their induction phase may change in their work habits, level of commitment, or emotional stability.

Need for Documentation

As distinguished from teachers dismissed due to insubordination or immorality charges, tenured teachers whom administrators consider ineffective are rarely dismissed. Why are there not more dismissals of incompetent teachers? Edwin M. Bridges says, "School districts that wish to confront this challenge face a formidable array of legal, technical, and human problems." Kelly Frels and Timothy Cooper concur, pointing out that due process requirements tend to place the principal, along with the teacher, on trial.

Appropriate documentation not only prepares an administrator for legal proceedings, it offers the teacher clear and concrete evidence of the charges as well as suggestions for improvement. Charges of incompetence rarely stem from one incident or even one cause. More likely, such a teacher displays a pattern of behavior over time that departs from standard practice; this pattern is documented by multiple observations and a series of suggested plans for remediation. Frels and Cooper provide a useful guide to the process of documentation, including memoranda to the principal's file, specific incident memoranda, records of classroom observations, and summaries of conferences with the teacher. They counsel administrators to rely on factual descriptions, avoid inflammatory words, and give clear directives.

The majority of charges brought against allegedly incompetent teachers involve poor discipline and classroom management. Other charges commonly include inadequate work habits and interpersonal relationships. Whatever the charge, first-hand observation and recording illuminates the degree of incompetence. For example, to record that "two students are wrestling on the floor during this geography lesson and three students are throwing pencils" produces clearer images than does "Mr. Jones has difficulty maintaining control of his social studies classes." "This teacher was more than fifteen minutes late reporting for work on 50 out of 160 days" clarifies a "tardiness" problem. "Mrs. Smith did not attend eight out of ten department meetings during this school year nor did she offer excuses for her absences" substantiates the charge that "Mrs. Smith does not take adequate responsibility for the functioning of her department." Similarly, verbatim transcripts of lessons can support other common charges of poor organization and planning, failure to control temper, or lack of proper grammar and spelling.

District Leadership

Clearly the principal cannot stand alone in attempts to terminate ineffective teachers. Not only does the teacher merit appraisal by more than one observer, the principal needs and deserves a second (or third or fourth) opinion. Bridges recommends that school districts take an organizational approach to the problem of incompetence. He outlines eight elements:

- Establish excellence in teaching as a high priority
- Adopt and publish reasonable criteria for evaluating teachers

- Adopt sound procedures for determining whether teachers satisfy these criteria and apply them uniformly
- Provide unsatisfactory teachers with remediation and a reasonable time to improve
- Establish and implement procedures for ensuring that appraisers have the requisite competencies
- Provide appraisers with the resources needed to carry out their responsibilities
- Hold appraisers accountable for evaluating and dealing with incompetent teachers
- Provide incompetent teachers with a fair hearing prior to making the dismissal decision

The growing body of research on effective teaching may provide some of the assistance principals and districts need to terminate unsatisfactory instructors. In the past, one obstacle to the support of the courts in dismissal hearings has been the lack of clear standards of teacher effectiveness against which an individual teacher's performance might be judged. Delbert K. Clear and John M. Box contend there has been a "desperate need for stable standards of performance" that will withstand judicial scrutiny. Court cases will become clearer to the degree that standards of required teacher knowledge and competence can be matched with evaluation systems capable of detecting departures from the standards. Clear and Box provide a list of teacher behaviors correlated with student learning, including their research base and their role in recent court decisions.

Documented incidents of incompetence need not always lead to dismissal hearings. In some cases remediation plans are effective: counseling, change of grade or school, supervised practice, or additional training may empower weak teachers. For both legal and ethical reasons, a district must make clear demonstration of repeated good-faith attempts to help ineffective teachers succeed. If such interventions fail, districts may be able to persuade unsatisfactory teachers to resign. In those cases, offering outplacement counseling as an adjunct to requests for resignation demonstrates the district's dual commitment to excellence in teaching and concern for the future of its employees.

Dismissing an incompetent teacher is probably the most time-consuming, emotionally draining task an administrator faces. Yet, as a single act, it has perhaps the greatest repercussions for the quality of education in a school. Bridges concludes his work on the management of incompetent teachers:

> A district that ignores its incompetent teachers may undermine the political support of parents and taxpayers, lower the morale of its competent teachers, and, most importantly, diminish the educational opportunities of some of its students. Conversely, a district that deals forthrightly with its unsatisfactory teachers can expect to increase public confidence in its institutional effectiveness; to preserve, if not raise, the morale of its teaching staff; and to provide all of its students with a meaningful and adequate education.

Facing the incompetent teacher is one link in the chain that produces effective schools. Without such confrontation, a district's investment in teacher selection and induction becomes just that—an investment for some distant future. To raise the quality of education in the short term, the health of a district's current teaching staff must be assessed as critically as that of potential future staff.

Planning Professional Development

It is 3:00 in the hot, humid afternoon. The speaker, poised at a chalkboard, searches the eyes of his audience for response, considering whether this inservice session will result in any changes in the classroom. Research allows us to make a few guesses provided we have some additional information.

Characteristics of Effective Training

According to Meredith D. Gall and Ronald S. Renchler, researchers tend to agree that staff or professional development programs result in improved teacher competence and student performance to the extent that

- participants are involved in the choice and design of training
- training objectives are clear
- objectives relate to improved student academic performance
- teachers' own expectations for success of this method are high
- complex skills are introduced gradually
- during the session, teachers learn from each other
- participation is mandatory in order to raise total school effectiveness
- the principal participates
- extensive followup aims at application and generalization of skills
- some followup aims at application and generalization of skills
- some followup takes place in teachers' classrooms
- participants receive some incentive or recognition, such as release time, college credits, movement on the salary scale

Ruth K. Wade adds a few more characteristics to the list. She recommends presenters assume strong leadership of the session and use techniques of microteaching, independent study, audio and visual feedback, and practice. Whether the training is voluntary or mandatory is not significant, she says, but she contends the best results may come from mixing elementary and secondary teachers. Unlike writers who believe the most effective inservice is born at the school or district level, Wade finds that programs developed or funded by state or federal government or by universities have the greatest chance of success.

And certainly, whether or not scientific studies support the theory, one might reasonably conclude that only under extraordinary circumstances could the combination of 3:00 p.m., heat, and humidity be predictive of growth in teacher competence or student achievement. Meticulous planning precedes

productive staff development: practical, as well as theoretical, issues cannot be ignored.

The Supervision Connection

Teachers everywhere assure hesitant students that tests are for their own good: "Today's exam tells me what you need to learn next." Earlier in this chapter teacher supervision/evaluation was said to be a precursor to the design of staff development programs within a school. When teachers undergo their own tests—assessments of professional competency—those "exams" should clarify goals of continued learning.

One Northwest school district terms these goals "targets." Targets for growth are established collaboratively by teacher and supervisor, resulting from self-appraisal and classroom observation and leading to specific staff development experiences. Similarly, when supervisors observe in each classroom of a school, they piece together a picture of the instructional program as a whole. Teacher and student performance in mathematics may be minimal; inconsistencies in language arts programming may be evident; many classrooms may show poor on-task rates. Whether the supervisor aids an individual teacher in finding needed training or helps fashion a schoolwide development program, evaluation is linked to further growth.

There is yet a second way of looking at the connection between supervision and staff development. Supervision done well *is* staff development. When educators look together at instruction, their collaboration prompts growth.

District Commitment

Professional development must not, however, be seen simply in a deficit design. By definition, professional development improves the capacity of individuals and groups to function professionally, whether it focuses upon their personal growth, implementation of curriculum, or improved functioning of the school as an organization. Because of its critical and wide-ranging goals, professional development demands a districtwide commitment.

The commitment needs to be both philosophical and financial. Districts noted for outstanding professional development programs share common beliefs: schools can always do better; change takes time; teachers who learn have students who learn. These districts have "five-year plans," carefully orchestrated designs that offer employees districtwide classes, school site training, pilot research programs, individual coaching, or tuition reimbursement. Comprehensive plans include informal programs as well: teacher materials centers, peer coaching relationships, team planning meetings. Teachers sharing with teachers is as important as experts sharing with audiences.

Whether professional development is on a formal or informal basis, effective programs aim to institutionalize reform through followup, often using

peer coaches or district-based teams of newly trained trainers. If change is to be effected in teaching behavior, staff development must focus as much on the application of knowledge as on the accumulation of knowledge. The days when the "Music Men" of education went from district to district offering one-hour inservices that promised to reform classrooms are hopefully diminishing in the light of research that stresses the necessity of extensive followup.

Finally, like any other professional program, staff development can be approached from a bureaucratic or a professional viewpoint. Teachers can enter a program resisting the fact that it is being "done to them," or they can be active initiators and participants. If professional development is indeed to be a professional activity, administrators need to share responsibility with teachers for its design, operation, and evaluation. Like any other administrative function, the process becomes as important, if not more important, than the product.

Conclusion

From the recruitment and selection of teachers to their supervision and development, leading the instructional staff is one of an administrator's most critical functions. The processes are themselves interrelated, interlocked.

The quality of those who apply for teaching positions within a particular school and of those who stay in the positions is related to the quality of the school itself. Capable candidates seek effective schools. They are more likely to be attracted to leaders who have high expectations for themselves and their staffs, who fashion supportive evaluation and professional development programs, and who summon the time and courage to dismiss incompetent instructors.

Whether the administrator is designing a program of recruitment, induction, supervision, or staff development, the process is as important as the product. To the degree that the process recognizes teachers as professionals, using their opinions and expertise, programs are likely to succeed. To the degree that the process emanates from a bureaucratic or paternalistic philosophy, one that allows changes to "happen to" educators, programs are likely to fail miserably. The method is, in fact, the message.

Schools that offer good working conditions for teachers—environments characterized by cohesion and support, collegiality and professionalism—attract outstanding educators. Better yet, they keep outstanding educators. Organizational vitality and teachers' competency interrelate as mutual cause and effect.